

Precise Answers on the Turkish Questions

An important clarification on widely
misunderstood issues of Takfeer and extremism

By Shaykh Abu Muhammad al Maqdisi

الموحدين
Al Muwahideen



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In the Name of Allah the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful,

All Praises belong to Allah and the Peace and Blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah (Salallahu alahyi wa salam),

To Proceed:

One of the Turkish Brothers visited me and informed me of the situation of the youth in Turkey and he handed over to me a letter on it and this is its summary:

All Praise is due to Allah the Lord of All that Exists and Peace and Prayers be upon the Noble Prophet (Salallahu alahyi wa salam),

Assalamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh,

May Allah Bless you our Noble Shaykhs, we love you and we have been benefitting much from you and we praise Allah for this and we ask Allah to gather us and you with the Last of the Messengers in The Highest Firdaws.

Firstly: We will explain to you the situation in Turkey and that is that the brothers have different opinions in regard to Takfeer, however this difference is not in the principles or the fundamentals (of Takfeer), rather it is in applying this judgement to the situation and over the people. And they are divided into three groups:

The First: They make Takfeer on everyone who participates in elections and everyone who doesn't make takfeer on Erdogan and the (Parliamentary) representatives. And they say that those Shaykhs who don't make takfeer of everyone who participates in the elections do not know the reality in Turkey and that the Turkish people are those who turn away from the Shareeah and neglect it. And they see that they are kaafir Asli (original kuffar) and they do not excuse them due to Jahl (ignorance) and they do not accept taweel(interpretations) and they say that (the kufr of) elections is from issues that are clear.

The Second: They are like the first, but they don't judge the individuals by this ruling while at the same time they believe that the Asl (default ruling) regarding the Turkish people is kufr and they do not judge with Islam on anyone whom they do not know his Aqeedah even if they see him pray.

The Third: They follow the Shaykhs of the Minbar of Tawheed and Jihad (www.tawhed.ws) in their books and Fataawa, like the Book of Shaykh Al Maqdisi (Letter on thirty issues

for warning from extremism in Takfeer) and the answers of the Shaykh for questions 1651 and 1635 on Turkey and is his book (Beneficial answer in participation in elections) and the article of Shaykh Abu Qatada (The reply to the one who sees the kufr of the Muslim people) and others such as these on Minbar.

Following this introduction, we would like from you an answer to the following questions, to advise our brothers in Turkey, May Allah Reward you with good.

*Do you see a difference between the Turkish people and other Muslim people?
How do people become Kaffir? Do you see that the Turkish people have become kaafirs?
How do you determine which are unclear matters?
How does an unclear issue become a clear issue?
What are the issues which determine this and when does it happen?
Is participation in elections from the unclear matters in Turkey?
Is he to be excused who continues to participate in elections even after being given the proof by the scholar who we look upon?
If they are not considered as kaafirs is it allowed to pray behind them?
If those who participate in elections are excused then how do interact them?
Is Takfeer of the Tawaghit from that which determines a persons Imaan or does this issue need further explanation?
The brothers in Turkey have differed on the takfeer on the prime minister Rajeb Tayyib Erdogan who has nominated himself now for the Presidency. What is the ruling upon him?
What is the ruling on the representatives of the legislative assembly? Are they individually made takfeer upon?*

And Finally the brothers have a question on the issue of the Islamic State and the Islamic brigades. Is it possible for you to guide us and advice us regarding this?

And may Allah Bless you with every goodness

Oh Allah have mercy upon us and our scholars and our brothers,

I say seeking refuge with Allah,

All Praise is for Allah and the Prayers and Peace be upon the Messenger of Allah (salallahu alahyi wa salam).

To proceed... Surely from the calamities that have entered upon the Ummah in our time is the fitna of extremism in Religion and the refusal to give excuses to the Muslims who disagree and having lack of mercy towards the general Muslims and what some of the

reckless ones have caused by permitting the blood and wealth and getting involved in it. And the effects of this are clearly seen today in the Muslim countries and it is not necessary for us to give examples . And we ask Allah to deliver the Muslims from its consequences and that He return their youth totally to the Religion of Truth.

And the reason for that is ignorance and lack of seeking Shariah Knowledge and giving fatwa in the Religion of Allah and speaking without knowledge in the big serious issues. And these people who speak on these matters, if you were to ask them about how much they have read on the topic of Iman and Kufr, you would surely find it to be shallow and a superficial reading which in no way nourishes nor avails for the thirsty.

Moreover, one should not speak on this matter unless he has atleast read the book "Kitab ul Iman" and "Saarimul Maslool" of Sheikh ul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, and the second part of the book "Shifaa" of Qaadi Iyaad. And due to this, we used to repeat reading them and we also used to have them read to the youth several times due to their importance. And we have combined their contents in our book "Ath Thalaatheeniyath" (Thirty Issues) And this Takfeer and the making conditions by the youth who are with you over the people affiliated to Islam whether Turkish or other than that, and not considering the prayer as one of the characteristics of the people of Islam, by which a person's Islam is testified to if he performs it, all these are only from the results of foolishness of extremism which has spread amongst a section of the youth while following hollow enthusiasm due to ignorance, and staying away from the statements of the scholars who do research and their criterion for Takfeer.

So the Asl (default ruling) of the one who prays is that of Islam until an action that invalidates it has been proven against him. And as long as that has not been proved, then declaring him to be Kaafir is declaring the one who prays to be from the Kuffar. And the door of evil is then opened by the reckless ones in killing them and permitting their wealth as is happening with the people of extremism. And in the hadith, *"I have been prohibited from killing the ones who pray"*.

And in Bukhari and Muslim on the authority Ibn Umar with the wording : *"Whoever says to his brother oh' kaafir' then it will have settled upon one of them."* And Muslim added in his narration *"If it is as he has stated (the disbelief of the man is confirmed), but if (it is untrue), then it will return back on him."*

And there is no difference between the people of Turkey and the other Muslim population. And we do not declare the people affiliated to Islam to be Kaafirs, neither in Turkey nor anywhere else. And we see that this is from the fruits of extremism and ignorance and misguidance in the religion. And the Asl (default ruling) is that we do not make Takfeer upon them except on him who has manifested a clear Kufr (Kufr Bawah) after looking into the conditions and the preventions.

And the unclear matters (المسائل الخفية), they are those matters that are not known by necessity from the Religion of the Muslims and they need to be cautioned about and admonished and clarified. And there is no doubt that the issues of elections and the term

democracy and other such names and actions of our times and foreign words are not from the clear issues which are known to everyone. But they are from the unclear matters and are acceptable to most of the people and they may also have different meanings. So some of them may intend by it a means (to implement the Shariah) and some may intend to mean what is opposite of dictatorship and torture and silencing of the voices and snatching away of freedom, and other such meanings which do not mean that of legislation that causes one to be a disbeliever. And some of the scholars have defined the unclear matters (المسائل الخفية) as those that are ambiguous and understood in different ways.

As for the clear matters (المسائل الظاهرة), they are those that ought to be necessarily known by all those to whom it has reached it in the language he understands. Allah Says,

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ

"And We sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the Message) clear for them".

Surat Ibrahim 14:4

And so whoever rejects it :

مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ

" after guidance has become clear to him"

Surat An Nisa 4:115

then he has opposed the Messenger.

And most of the differences between the Muslims in some of the matters which some consider as those necessarily known is because of the differences in looking at issues. So some of what is known may be different for one individual and another because it is a matter that is relative and varies in regards to each individual. And an example for this is what has been authentically narrated from Abdul Rahman bin Yazeed, who said *"Abdullah ibn Masood used to scratch off the Muawwizathayn (the last two chapters of the Quran) from the Musshafs and would say "They are not from the Book of Allah, glory be to Him, the Exalted". And no Muslim would say that Ibn Masood is a Kaafir because he had denied what is known by necessity. And it cannot be imagined that his likes denied that the Muawwizathayn is from the Quran even though it has been affirmed to be from the Quran that is with him.*

And due to to this, our Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have Mercy on him)

said in his Majmoo al Fataawa (23/347): A matter being definite (Qath'i) or speculative (Zanni)¹ are from issues which are accompanying matters (those connected to the situation/case). And an issue may be for a man something which is certain due to having clear evidence for it, like the one who heard the revelation from the Messenger and is certain of what is meant by it. And for another man this same may not even be an unclear speculative issue (i.e. have no idea at all about this matter), let alone be a definite clear cut matter, due to the text not having reached him, or due to the matter not being confirmed for him, or due to his inability to gain the knowledge by evidences.

And he said in Majmoo al Fataawa (19/211), "So the matter being definite or speculative is an accompanying matter that is in accordance with the situation of the ones having belief. It is not a description for the statement by itself. Since a man may find a matter to be clear and definite (Qath'i) which he would know by necessity, or through a transmission whose truthfulness is known to him while those other than him may not know it neither with certainty (Qath'i) nor can he assume about it (Zanni). And a person may be intelligent, strong in mind, and quick in understanding and so he knows the truth. So a matter becomes definite for him while others do not think about it and they do not know it either by knowledge or even by assumptions.

So being definite or speculative is according to the proofs that have reached the person, and in accordance with his ability to find proofs. And people are different in regards to these. So a matter being definite or speculative is not a necessary characteristic of the disputed statement, for it to be said that "whoever has opposed it has opposed what is definitely known". Rather it is the description of the condition of the one looking to find out proofs while having beliefs. And this is from those that people differ upon.

And he, may Allah have mercy on him said in "Minhaaju Sunnah" (5/91), "So a matter being definite or speculative is an accompanying matter according to the condition of the ones having beliefs. It is not a description of the statement by itself. So a matter may be clear and definite (Qath'i) to a man which he would know by necessity, or through a transmission whose truthfulness is known to him while those other than him may not know it neither with certainty (Qath'i) nor can he have speculations (Zanni) about it. And the person may be intelligent, strong in mind, and quick in understanding and so he knows the truth. So a matter becomes definite for him while others would not think about it and they do not know it either by knowledge or even by assumptions. So being definite or speculative is in accordance to the proofs that have reached the person, and in accordance with his ability to find proofs.

And due to this those who are new in Islam and foreigners who do not understand the Arabic language are excused in matters that those other than them are not excused.

¹ Qathi قطعي translated as "Definite matter" is "An undisputed evidence that is clear to all without any possibility to have another interpretation" (or be understood differently)

Zanni ظني translated as "Speculative matter" is "An evidence that can be more than one possible interpretation" (and can be understood differently)

And because of that he also said in Majmoo al Fataawa (6/60), "Indeed the statement of truth, when it is said, then it's necessary confirmatory characteristic is for it to be in consistence with the news. As for it being to the listener a thing that is known, or assumed or unknown or known with definite clarity or speculation or whether it must be accepted or prohibited or whether the one who denies it should be considered a Kaafir or not, these are practical rules that differ based on the difference regarding the individuals and the situations. So if you have seen an Imam being harsh towards a person who made a statement or made Takfeer on him due to that, then this is not considered a general rule over all those who have said it except if the condition which deserves this harshness and Takfeer has been fulfilled, for indeed the one who denies a thing from the apparent rules of the Shareeah and has newly accepted Islam or grew up in a country of ignorance is not declared to be an unbeliever until the Prophetic evidence reaches him.

Similarly is the case of its opposite. If you have seen a wrong statement that was made by an Imam in the past and he has been excused due to the proof (hujjah) not having reached him, then the one to whom the proof has reached is not excused for what the first has been pardoned."

When this is known and it is known that an issue may be clear for one person and unclear for another, then it is not permissible to treat an individual by looking at the situation of the majority (of people) without looking into his own situation in regards to understanding and lack of understanding or rejecting it or not rejecting it . And from this we know that the act of applying the rule of takfeer upon a people entirely without considering this principle is from ignorance which many of the extremists of our era have fallen into.

And in a hadeeth in Saheeh Al Bukhari narrated on the authority of Anas bin Malik, he said : The Messenger of Allah salallahu alayhi wa salam said *"Whoever prays like us and faces our Qibla and eats our slaughtered animals is a Muslim and is under Allah's and His Apostle's protection. So do not betray Allah by betraying those who are in His protection"*

And this hadeeth represents a principle of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah which distinguishes them from the people of Ghuloo (extremism) and the Khwaarij. And this is from the Asl (basic ruling) that Islam remains for the one who is seen to have displayed some of the characteristics of Islam until he commits a known nullifier (of Islam) which is clear and not just suspicion and the conditions of Takfeer must be present and there are no preventions of Takfeer, because certainty is not removed with doubt.

Sheikh ul Islam, may Allah have mercy on him said, "No one should make takfeer on another from amongst the Muslims even if he has made mistakes and acted wrongly, until the proof has been set up against him, and the evidences have been made clear for him. And the one whose Islam has been confirmed with certainty, then it does leave him by doubts. Rather, it does not leave him until after the proof has been established and the doubts are removed".

So based on this, the two groups mentioned in the first and second questions are groups committing error and have strayed away from the truth as they have made Takfeer on the people of Turkey entirely or partially, and did not treat anyone of them as Muslims even if he has prayed until he knows what comes from his heart, then all of these are from misguidance which we absolve ourselves from. We had previously cautioned about it and rejected it in our above mentioned letter “Thalaatheeniyat” (Thirty Issues). So the original ruling is to accept what is apparent. So whoever has shown one of the distinct characteristics of the people of Islam, then he is judged with Islam. And we do not need to know what is in his heart. Ibn Hajar says in "Al Fath hul Baari" (12/272), "And all of them have consensus that the worldly rulings are based on what is apparent and Allah looks after the private affairs".

I add to this the obligation of considering the distinction over that which we always caution about which is between the weak Muslim people and between those sections of people that withhold from the Shareeah while having authority and impose Kufr and rule over such people by other than what Allah has revealed. Indeed the masses of the weak Muslim population should be dealt with mercy and without hastening to make Takfeer on them due to the permissibility for them to use Taqiyyah (concealing one's faith) in a situation of weakness. And I mean by Taqiyyah, the concealment of enmity towards the kuffar and not openly making Takfeer and Baraa (disassociation) from them. And whoever does not openly do it due to his situation of weakness is excused and it is not permissible to declare him as an unbeliever.

And I have seen a lot of the youth quoting some of the generalized statements of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab and some of the Imams of the Najdi Dawah regarding that. And so they understand that to mean making Takfeer on the one who does not openly display his enmity towards the kuffar or exclaim his disassociation from them. So they would not excuse the one who is weak and they would not testify to anyone's Islam even if he prayed and fasted and claimed to be a Muslim until he announces his disassociation from the Thawaageeth despite his weakness. And this is a wrong understanding and a clear mistake that gave rise to the emergence of extremists throughout the country. And we had paid heed to these kinds of general declarations in the statements of the Imams of the Dawah in the beginning while studying and writing and so you would see that we have cautioned about some of them in the footnotes of our book “Millath Ibrahim” and others since more than thirty years, by the grace of Allah. And this was not just born in this hour, so whoever wishes let him refer that in our books.

An example of that is our comment over a statement of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab which we have quoted in “Millath Ibrahim” and that is his statement, “So if you have known this, then you know that a person's Islam will not be upright even if he follows Tawhid and abandoned shirk (polytheism) except by having enmity to the Mushrikeen (polytheists) and by declaring enmity and hatred towards them as stated by Allah the Exalted:

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ

“You will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger”

Surat Mujaadilah 58:22

And a little further is the statement of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abdul Latheef from “Durar Saniyyah”: - “Know, may Allah guide us and you to that which He loves and is pleased with, that a slave’s Islam or religion will not be upright except by him having enmity towards the enemies of Allah and His messenger, and by loyalty towards the friends of Allah and His Messenger. Allah the Exalted says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا آبَاءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

“O you who believe! Take not as supporters your fathers and your brothers if they prefer disbelief to belief. And whoever of you befriends them, then he is one of the wrongdoers.”

Surat At Tawbah 9:23

... from the portion of Jihad (p.208).

So you would find us having commented over these two texts, by our statement in the footnotes (of Milat Ibrahim), “If what is meant is the asl (basis) of enmity then these words are to be taken absolutely. But if what is meant is the general enmity; its showing and its precise details and making it apparent, then these words are (to be taken to) refer to the (level of) correctness of the Islam and not the removal of its entire foundation. And the Shaykh Abdul Latif has in his book “Misbah Az Zalaam”, an explanation regarding this issue, so whoever wishes to should review it. And therein is his statement, “So the one who understands the words of the Shaykh, to mean making Takfir on whoever does not openly show his enmity, then his understanding is Baathil (false) and his opinion is astray...” And the explanation of these words will be presented within these pages, and we have only narrated their statements within this chapter in order to clarify the importance of this basis, whose fundamental concepts have been snatched away from most of the callers (duaat) in this time. Then we added these clarifications – despite the words themselves being clear (in and of themselves), to close the path upon those who attempt to hunt in murky waters, (by means of searching for general (statements) and things, which might assist others in accusing us of holding the beliefs (aqidah) of the khawarij).”

And examples of these general statements are found in Ad Durar as Saniyyah and similar other books . And when the books of the Imams of the Najdi Dawah and their past letters

are not clarified at the proper places, then this causes extremism to grow in many arenas. And this was what the extremists of Peshawar mostly depended upon and so does the group of (Abu Mariyam) Al Mukhlif depend on such, as does Abu Umar Al Kuwaiti, Zia u Deen al Maqdisi and Al Hazmee in some of the his extracts which I have read which are like that. The extremists have treated such general statements as if they are foundations of the Shareeah, rather they magnified them and built upon them their schools of thought just as the scholar establishes his foundations upon the clear verses and the authentic hadith which are clear proofs. And the one who has read the Fataawa of the Imams of the Dawah, will see that some of them also applied those general statements in a dangerous manner around them through which they aided the Thawaghit and made the blood of the followers of Tawhid permissible. And nothing can better prove that than the fatawa of the well known scholars of Al Arid in their Takfeer of the Ikhwan from the Ajmaan and Duwaysh and those with them in permitting their blood as I had previously clarified in my reply to question no.3269. And they were followed in their path by contemporary scholars in issuing fatawas to kill our Mujahideen brothers due to their Jihad and in calling them Khawarij and misguided group and such..

And let it be known that my claims that in the books of the Imams of the Dawah, there are unrestricted statements that need to be explained in context is not a claim I made up myself, even though it is a result of my in depth reading of their books. But I was preceded in that by the most well known scholars of Hijaz. Indeed, I have seen Sheikh Ibn Baz warning against these general statements and he used to say that a student would fall into extremism if he reads some of the books of the Imaams of the Dawah without (the guidance) of a Shaykh and would be led to errors. And we used to condemn that saying of his in the beginning while we were studying and having devotion to those books, due to our enthusiasm and our longing for those books. And then Allah bestowed His favour on us and we began to see those unrestricted statements and mistakes against which we warned our brothers in an early period as you have seen. And what is to be pointed out is that my advice to the youth in Turkey and other than Turkey is to be careful of this and do not go behind critical issues which will result in the spilling of blood and making of wealth and honour permissible in many countries.

And making Takfeer on the Thawagit, if what is meant by Thawagit are people who are affiliated to Islam who have committed what nullifies (their Islam), then the issue of Takfeer on them as individuals may be unclear to a lot of these and other people. So making Takfeer on them while that is their condition is not from the basis of Imaan that would determine its correctness. Indeed, the only condition of Imaan is to disbelieve in Thawagit which would mean disassociating from worshipping it by any kind of worship which is shirk and turning away from obeying it in Kufr or legislation which has not been permitted by Allah and to turn away from supporting it and allying with them or allying with their supporters or their worshippers. As for Takfeer, then that is from its aftermaths and is not from the conditions of its validity. So it not permissible to make Takfeer on an ignorant one in this matter as long as he has fulfilled the statement of Allah the Exalted:

اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

"Worship Allah and avoid the Thaguth".

Surat An Nahl 16:36

As for the president (of Turkey), then he is a secularist. And even if he differed with the Ataturk secularists, then he only differed from them in interpreting secularism and he does not disassociate himself from secularism. Rather, he interprets it regarding it praiseworthy thinking good of it. And that is a false interpretation which is not outside the framework of the secularism that makes one a Kafir as he interprets it by separating the religion from the state and leaving religion as a matter of choice to the one who wants. And his case is similar to the one who would apostatize if he wants. This is different from the Ataturk secularism which was a war against the religion of Islam and its symbols and everything that was linked to it. And this interpretation which this man considered to be good, and is promoting it has got nothing to do with Islam since the religion of Islam does not permit disbelief and associating partners to Allah and does not accept it and does not separate between politics and religion. Rather all of them are nullifiers of Islam and they are from the clear Kufr.

But we know the condition that the Muslims were upon during the time of the Ataturk Secularists when they took over the presidency and they dominated over the majority in the parliament. And we see as has been seen by many people that the situation of the Muslims under the government of Erdogan is lesser evil, rather in the words of a lot of Turks, in a better condition than before. And they also point out his bold stances or nationalistic stances towards the issues of the Muslims and such others.

And we always direct our brothers in all countries which do not fight nor clash with Islam from within and its people in it are not attacked rather the preachers are granted some freedom and the transportation of the mujahideen are to an extent not prevented, to avoid clashing with these kinds of regimes as long as they are incapable of a real change. We advise them to take advantage of the freedoms which are available for them to call towards Allah amongst the ranks of the people and educate them and guide them with that which is best, and by wisdom and beautiful preaching whether they are from those who participate in elections or not. And to raise up the youth in Tawhid and to teach them and cause them to understand the correct path and to protect them from falling into the pits of extremism and Irjaa.

And let them avoid harmful haphazard actions that are of little benefit and those that bring them no results except pressure and constraints in their religion and their Dawah and also in their movement and their livelihood and leaving their youth to be imprisoned with no real benefit for them or their religion or their worldly life.

And with this we advise the youth in Turkey to utilize this stage to call towards Tawheed, and teach their brothers its basics and warn them from straying towards excessiveness or negligence and not to un spin their thread (i.e undo their good work) and cause their dawah to be in vein, nor be negligent about it by responding to the call of the extremists who do not really have a basis and who go every day to something new without a yardstick or clear guidance or who call the youth and stir them in every calamity to carry out undisciplined acts blindly without benefit to the people of Islam..... But let them focus on matters of preparation and assisting in that which empowers the people of Islam. And do not obligate them to give dawah to give bayyah to one who has no authority upon them and no connection to their land and is not capable of fulfilling their rights or supporting them. And do not cause disorder in their rows or fragment their actions which are done for the sake of the Religion and their dawah to Tawheed nor dispute and be divided, like the example of such kind of extremists' calls. But let them be straight and firm upon the call to Tawheed and strive in it and guide the believers and come close to them and ally with them wherever they may be and whatever may be their names.

And I ask Allah Ta'ala to rectify their situation and guide them to the Straight path and to give them understanding in the Deen and use them for its victory and not replace them, And the Prayers and Peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and on his Family and Companions, all of them.

Written: Abu Muhammad Al Maqdisi
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